

Committee of Thirteen Report

July 11, 2006

The Committee of Thirteen of the Benton County Quorum Court met Tuesday, July 11, 2006 at 5:00 P.M. in the Quorum Court Room, County Administration Building, Third Floor, 215 East Central, Bentonville, Arkansas.

11 JPs Present:	Allen, Harrison, Hill, Moore, Schindler, Sheridan, Stephenson, Summers, Tharp, Wolf, Wozniak
2 Absent:	Adams, Sampier
Others Present:	Ed Gartin, Richard McComas, Travis Harp
Media:	Jennifer Turner – Daily Record, Joe Askins – Morning News

JP Tim Summers called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Don Day stated that he was in agreement with a letter to the editor written by JP Burt Schindler in support of the proposed flag amendment.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Resolution Request – Granting Authority to County Judge to Sign Interlocal Agreement Regarding Aviation Fuel Sales Tax

Comptroller Richard McComas stated that over the past 2 or 3 years, the county has collected the sales tax on fuel at the Northwest Arkansas Regional Airport, and it has been determined that since the Airport receives Federal grant money, all revenue from fuel sales must be returned to the Airport. JP Summers stated that they have a Resolution authorizing the County Judge to sign an Interlocal Agreement, and asked if the county would become a pass-through for the tax. Richard McComas stated that was correct, that the State will collect the money, send it to the County, and the County will send it to the Airport. He said they are working with the Legislature to try and get the regulations changed so that the State can collect it and send it straight to the Airport. JP Tharp made motion to approve the proposed Resolution and forward it to the July 27, 2006 Quorum Court meeting, seconded by JP Sheridan. Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

2. Discussion: Planning Department Revenues/Expenses

JP Summers stated that the Finance Committee had heard a 6-month report on Planning Department revenues from permit fees. Comptroller Richard McComas distributed copies of the report. He said that the fees collected totaled \$144,103, and expects another \$150,000 during the remainder of the year. He said that would give them a surplus of \$30,853 at year's end, and that they expect a deficit in 4 line items that will require a budget adjustment leaving a surplus of \$26,000 and another \$12,000 remaining from the purchase of vehicles. He said the Planning Department wants to purchase a software package to process all of the permits and fees which will cost approximately \$40,000, and they are asking for \$20,000 this year and \$20,000 next year. He said they are not expecting to need any additional funds. JP Summers stated that the Finance Committee had approved amending the budget if necessary to provide the \$20,000 this year, and the Committee of Thirteen will need to approve sending the Planning Department software package out for bids. JP Sheridan made motion to authorize the County Judge to send the software package for out for bids, seconded by JP Moore. The Committee discussed the software package. Assistant County

Administrator Travis Harp explained that they need a program to keep an accurate accounting of the money that is taken in and which permits have been issued. JP Allen stated that the system should be compatible with other area systems in case they ever need to work together or share information. Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote. JP Summer stated that there have been 355 permits issued, and that they are able to do the inspections in 24 hours. JP Allen stated that he knew that a committee had been formed to hire a new Planning Director, but he hoped they could remain apprised of the quality of applicants since the person will have to work closely with the Quorum Court. JP Hill asked if they would be able to meet with the final few applicants. JP Summers stated that this is a staff decision which will be the County Judge's call, and that they have formed a committee to help make the selection.

3. Discussion: Paperless Agenda

JP Summers stated that the Finance Committee had heard a preliminary presentation from the Information Systems Department, and revisited the possibility of paperless agendas. He said they will refine the proposal, and they are just trying to determine if it is something they want to pursue.

OTHER BUSINESS:

JP Schindler stated that the County receives a 3% Franchise Fee on gross revenue from Cox Cable Company, and that the city of Little Rock is negotiating with another company for 5%. He said that the fees continue to go up without any added service, and he has asked County Attorney Ed Gartin if there is an opportunity to modify the County's position. JP Summers asked if all of the rural areas are served by Cox, because they only receive the franchise tax from unincorporated areas. He asked County Attorney Ed Gartin if he knew how the incorporation of Bella Vista would affect the contract. JP Tharp stated that he was not aware of anyone in his area of the county being provided cable service at all, and that this agreement was not anything unusual. JP Sheridan stated that they are not talking about a lot of money.

JP Summers stated that the Finance Committee has approved authorizing the County Coroner to use the money in her budget to purchase a cooler for her facility. JP Stephenson stated that he believed she had shown the need for the cooler. JP Allen made motion to approve the purchase of up to \$5,000 by the County Coroner for a cooler to hold no fewer than 3 persons, seconded by JP Schindler. JP Wolf stated that there are occasions when they do not have enough space in the funeral homes and other locations to hold bodies. JP Summers stated that the growth in the county also caused other things to increase, such as accidents. Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

JP Tharp stated that he was pleased to see that the permit and inspection fee program was going well, and he had done a survey of every small town in the County, and has determined that the County's fees are cheaper than every other city in the county with the exception of a 4,000 square foot home in Gentry, Gravette, or Decatur.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

JP Moore announced that a Long Range Planning/Properties & Equipment meeting is tentatively scheduled for July 18, 2006 at 5:30 p.m.

JP Stephenson announced that the next Personnel Committee meeting would be July 25, 2006 at 4:00 p.m.

JP Wozniak announced that the next Environmental Committee meeting would be June 20, 2006 at 5:00 p.m.

JP Summers announced that the next Finance Committee meeting would be August 1, 2006 at 2:30 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.